

' The Smash-up' (' La D<SMcle'), let us hope
that you will
soon write 'Victory.'" " Ah, general I" replied
Zola, rais-
ing his forefinger, " that is your business."
And thereupon
he sat down.

The value of books is not to be estimated
by their
length or even by their popularity. Yet it may
not be
inappropriate to point out that the Kougon-
Macquart se-
ries, which Zola had now completed, was really
a colossal
performance. Besides a large variety of other
work, the
novelist had written the twenty volumes of
that series in
about five and twenty years, introducing, as he
proceeded,
no fewer than twelve hundred characters to
his readers.
The twenty volumes represented nine
thousand pages of
print, each of three and thirty lines, and,
assuming an
average of nine words per line and making
allowance for
"blanks,"—by no means numerous in Zola's
works,—one
may say that they contained quite two million
five hun-
dred thousand words. Passing to another
matter, one finds
that at the time of the appearance of " Le
Docteur Pascal"
there had been sold over half a million copies
of the ordi-
nary Charpentier edition of the series. The
popular illus-
trated editions of several of the stories, first
sold in what
one may call "penny parts," had also circulated
very widely,
at least to the extent of a quarter of a
million copies;
and further there had been some *Editions de*

luxe, copies
on special papers, and so forth. Moreover, there
were five
novels written before the Eougon-Macquart
series was
begun, with four volumes of short stories and
seven vol-
umes of essays and other papers, issued at
various times;
and one may therefore assume that between
eight and
nine hundred thousand copies of Zola's
books had been